AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-5   (Cancelled)

6.   (Currently amended) A rules engine, comprising:

[[a.]] a) an ~~input circuit~~ interface for receiving ~~at least one~~ a transaction containing an order for execution; and

[[b.]] b) a storage medium having rules for determining whether or not to execute orders and a plurality of preset levels of scope of application stored thereon, wherein:

~~at least one~~ each rule has an assigned a level of scope of application selected from the plurality of preset ~~scope~~ levels, [[and]]

each preset level of scope of application specifies a scope of source of transactions [[that]] for which a corresponding rule should apply to all transactions from any source within the specified ~~source;~~ scope, and

~~wherein~~ the assigned ~~scope~~ level corresponding to ~~the at least one~~ each rule is adjustable from a first one of the plurality of preset ~~scope~~ levels to a second one of the plurality of preset ~~scope~~ levels based on a user ~~setting~~ setting; and

an order/transaction processing section for applying at least one of the rules to the received transaction based on source of the received transaction being within the specified scope of the level assigned to each applied rule, to determine whether or not to execute the order contained in the received transaction.

7.   (Currently amended) The rules engine of claim 6, in which the assigned level of scope of application of an applied rule specifies a specific account.

8.   (Currently amended) The rules engine of claim 6, in which the assigned <u>level of</u> scope of application <u>of an applied rule</u> specifies a specific registered representative.

9.   (Currently amended) The rules engine of claim 6, in which the assigned <u>level of</u> scope of application <u>of an applied rule</u> specifies a specific office.

10.   (Currently amended) The rules engine of claim 6, in which the assigned <u>level of</u> scope of application <u>of an applied rule</u> specifies a specific firm.

11.   (Currently amended) The rules engine of claim 6, in which the assigned <u>level of</u> scope of application <u>of an applied rule</u> is set to the global level.

12.   (Original) The rules engine of claim 6, in which a rule is accompanied by a message to be sent when a rule is violated.

13.   (Previously Presented) The rules engine of claim 12, in which the text of said message can be changed by a user for a selected level.

Claims 14 and 15   (Cancelled)

16.   (Currently amended) A method for processing a transaction containing an order for execution, the method comprising the steps of:

accessing a plurality of rules, each [[rule]] respective one of the rules having a preset

level of scope of application scope specifying a scope of source of transactions that a

corresponding for which the respective rule should apply to all transactions from any source

within the specified source scope; and

checking the transaction containing the order to determine whether or not to execute the

order contained in the transaction, by first applying rules having application scope specifying a

specific account, then applying rules having application scope specifying a specific registered

representative, then applying rules having application scope specifying a specific office, then

applying rules having application scope specifying a specific firm and then applying rules having

application scope applicable to transactions from all sources.

17.   (Previously Amended)   The method of claim 16, in which the rules include

compliance rules.

Claims 18-21 (Cancelled)

22.   (Currently amended)   ~~An apparatus~~ A system for processing a transaction

containing an order for execution, the system comprising:

[[a.]] a) a client process for generating and sending [[a]] the transaction containing [[an]]

the order for execution;

[[b.]] b) a rules engine for receiving said transaction from said client process and

applying at least one of a plurality of user configurable rules to said transaction; and

[[c.]] c) at least one execution process for receiving said order from said rules engine and for executing the order, when the application of at least one of the rules by said rules engine results in an approved outcome,

wherein:

said each of the at least one user configurable rule rules comprises at least one a rule having an assigned level of scope of application selected from a plurality of preset levels of scope of application,

each preset level of scope of application specifies a scope of source of transactions [[that]] for which a corresponding rule should apply to all transactions from any source within the specified source scope, and

the assigned level of scope of application is adjustable from a first one of the plurality of preset scope levels to a second one of the plurality of reset scope levels based on a user setting.

23.   (Cancelled)

24.   (Currently amended) Apparatus A system for processing a transaction containing a request to transfer assets between accounts, the system comprising:

[[a.]] a) a client process for generating and sending [[a]] the transaction containing [[a]] the request to transfer assets between accounts;

[[b.]] b) a rules engine for receiving said transaction from said client process and applying at least one of a plurality of user configurable [[rule]] rules to said transaction; and

[[c.]] c) at least one execution process for receiving said request from said rules engine and for transferring assets as requested, when application of at least one of the rules by said rules engine results in an approved outcome,

~~wherein~~ wherein:

the at least one rule includes an assigned <u>level of</u> scope of application selected from a plurality of preset ~~scope~~ <u>levels</u>;

each preset <u>level of</u> scope of application specifies a <u>scope of</u> source of transactions [[that]] <u>for which</u> a corresponding rule should apply to all transactions from <u>any source with</u> the specified ~~source,~~ <u>scope;</u>

[[and]]

the assigned ~~scope~~ <u>level</u> is adjustable from <u>a</u> first one of the plurality of preset ~~scope~~ <u>levels</u> to <u>a</u> second one of the plurality of preset ~~scope~~ <u>levels</u> based on a user setting;

~~and~~

~~wherein:~~

the at least one [[user]] <u>rule</u> has an assigned outcome selected from a plurality of preset ~~outcomes,~~ <u>outcomes;</u> and

the assigned outcome is adjustable from a first one of the plurality of preset outcomes to a second one of the plurality of preset outcomes based on user setting.

Claim 25-28   (Cancelled)

7